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American Dramatists Series

Their Lives Translated

AN ORIGINAL PLAY
IN THREE ACTS WITH
PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE

By

CORA TEN EYCK

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Principal

Tammen—*Spirit of Solitude.*
Degen, Corna } *Lovers of all Time.*
Craig—*Their celestial friend.*

Minor

Three Judges of the Seventh Heaven.

* * *

Osmo—*Corna's man in the Stone Age.*
Oak—*A man of the Stone Age.*

* * *

Justin—*Corna's father, a medieval King.*
Hagar—*Corna's nurse.*
Attendants; soldiers.

* * *

Three Gentlemen of Georgian Period.
Lady Sybil, Lady Clara } *Corna's friends.*
Lord Fulton—*Corna's suitor.*
Father of Corna.
Three Citizens.

* * *

Their Lives Translated

PROLOGUE

Scene in the mountains. Tammen is seen waiting for a youth who struggles wearily up over the rocks toward him.

TAMMEN

"What seekest thou here, rash youth, in this forbidding spot?
Has sorrow urged thee to these lonely heights?
Or hast thou heard the music of the spheres,
And seek'st thou here the hand that strikes the harp?
Seems to mine aging eye you must be ministered
By legion guardian angels. Speak, splendid youth,
Acquaint me with thy heart's profoundest wish;
Perhaps my feeble hand may hold the cup
Of knowledge that thou cravest; well I know
Not Youth's gay whim hath been thy pilot here;
The "Mighty Secret" must have stretched to you her hand
Across the waste and burning desert sand;
Thou art the one, truly I know thy face.

DEGEN

Father, had my heart been a book that you had read
You could not then have read the text more clear;
Never indeed hath Youth her whimsies flashed
Brightly enough to blind me. All my life
Has superstition fouled the bubbling fount
Of Thought, and black Fear essayed
To beat me back into the trodden paths
Millions have followed blindly. Did they leave
A fitting answer to the soul's demands
For reason, reason for the souls sojourning here
Through tears and trials, through wars and pestilence;
And last, not least, through the winding ways of love
Alluring, maddening, stripping the soul of strength
But satisfying never, like the poppy's song
Whose ultimate sweetness no mortal ever hears?
Aye! had they answered any one of these
My treasonable questions, I had not here been found
Way-worn, weary, but still as the lover flies
To love's first trysting, seeking solitude.

TAMMEN

If then thou seekest solitude
Thou hast no need for me. I will away.

DEGEN

Stay, father! stay! you seem to be
Solitude articulate, the soul of what I sought.
If you are not the voice of wisdom clothed
In terrestrial garments, you do seem to be,
Call yourself Solitude and further speak with me.

TAMMEN

What wouldst thou then of Solitude
My son, hast thou not learned of life that all is mystery?
And were I solitude indeed, could I have gaged
Those soundless depths the walls of centuries guard?
Where hast thou learned that Solitude could speak?

DEGEN

Father, I am not satisfied with Science's devious way,
Her multiplied divisions. Have we found
The fountain head of Life's tremendous urge;
The answer to those questions that go thundering down
Through generations, dying out at last
In each sad heart, only as that heart ceases troubling,

Sinking unsatisfied, into the past profound?
Why was I given vision of myself complete,
Only to seek in vain for my completed self?
You know 'tis written, seek and thou shalt find,
Knock, it shall be opened unto you; these words are not
Empty of meaning. I have dwelt apart
Much of my youth, being called a dreamer, aye and idler, too,
But I have had, and it has paid for all,
Glimpses of life as though it had not here
Begun its stormy passage. Why I should
Say stormy, when my life has sheltered been,
And grief has not come nigh me, I know not; but I know
The words are truth and I would prove them here.
Have you no message for me, graybearded Solitude?

TAMMEN

Thou hast believed that unto him who knocked
It should be opened, and it shall be. Solitude
Hath forced the gates of wisdom; at that password Faith,
They open for thy eager feet to pass. But when thou comest hence
Thou canst no longer be the child of Circumstance.

Thou comest forth a Master, or thou canst not come
at all.
Art willing to forsake thy care-free days
And put thy shoulder to the wheels of Fate,
Which grind out Justice to a doubting world;
The distant good, and not the present ease?

DEGEN (*greatly excited*)

Your words are tokens of a half-glimpsed truth,
I am no finite man. I have elsewhere lived,
Rejoiced and suffered. This wall I would pull
down
From betwixt myself and memory. 'Tis a flimsy
thing
To so resist intelligence and prayer, for I have
prayed
For an extended vision. I am willing, father,
For any load of duty, rather than to be
The mouse Tantalus plays with ceaselessly.
Can you direct me to Life's dwelling place?

TAMMEN

Thou hast thyself discovered it. Thy feet
Are standing where she lately trod, her breath
Even now disturbs the mountain's quiet hour. Hark!
(*They hear soft rustling, as of wind in the trees*).
Come, prepare to meet her.

(*Degen starts, looks intently as at something in the distance, clasps hand over his eyes, looks again, exclaims*:) I see! I see! (*Forgets Tammen, falls on knees, prays*:)

Father, the way's been grievous, I'll do thy will,
Complete thy work in me.

(*Tammen steps in front of Degen as Corna, hair streaming, long cape splashed and torn, drooping from one shoulder, picks her way staggeringly over the rocks*).

CORNA (*pantingly*)

I'm mad, of course, I must be mad. (*Sees Tammen, stops*).
God mocks my madness, 'twas from man I fled and here's a man,
Gray locks don't matter, I could tempt even he.

TAMMEN (*gently*)

Daughter, what troubles thee? Let the old man be
Thy father confessor.

(*Corna glances back the way she came as if to retreat, clutching her cloak about her, then steps impulsively toward Tammen*).

I will. I'll pour my heart out. You are no mortal man, say so for my sake.

TAMMEN

And if I were, there do be some
Who have immortal gifts, and have permit
To use them even on earth, that mortal eyes
May look on life and death beyond the skies.
For there is death in heaven, only thus
Could earth be peopled . . .

CORNA (*with scorn*)

Pah! old man, I care not what's in heaven, it can wait
For its own time, answering its own questions;
My concern is here, here with my mad *human heart,*
My soul is caught in this (strikes her bosom);
Father, I fled, not so much from men as from myself.
Oh! I have dreamed of love as something high and holy,
And played with it as birds employ the breeze
To lighten their own flight, seeking in every man
An anchorage for self, but finding only scorn
Deep scorn for all they gave, and they have given richly
And from noble hearts. Is it that I am made
As bawds are made, that I can never find
One man to fix my heart to constancy and love?

If thoughts spell guilt, my heart is deeply dyed.
From self I fled. Oh, hoary hermit hide
This daughter of Eve, this cold, unnatural woman.

TAMMEN

'Tis not to hide thyself that thou hast come
It was to find thyself. Knowest thou this man?
(*Steps aside revealing Degen, who has risen to his feet. They look into each other's eyes and unconsciously step toward each other, throwing out their hands. Tammen waves them back, saying*:)
Not yet, my children. Parted centuries, you know each other instantly.
You two have won, through long endeavor, the right to memory
And the higher knowledge. For one brief hour you may
Read o'er the records of your yesterdays. (*He waves his hands slowly up and down before their faces. Both slowly sink down and sleep. Tammen clasps hands, exclaims*).
Come, heavenly host, come, Craig, the hour has struck;
Unbind their eyes, loosen their memories; they'll seek the Higher path.

Curtain

ACT I

Scene 1—White palace of Degen in the Sixth heaven; green lawns sloping down to lake which is surrounded by great trees and tall flowers reflected in the water. Carved stone seat overhung by tree and flowering shrubs in central foreground. Curtain rises on group of judges from the Seventh heaven.

FIRST JUDGE

Now, e'er our happy host returns
From wandering in yon woods with his delight,
Unseal the record of his long content.
He must go on, but he must choose to go.

SECOND JUDGE

The Master Mind proclaims for the young world
called Earth,
An era of advancement, and has called
For several million free souls to start the upward
drive.
As we all know, there must be leaders for these millions lately come
From the last dead world, and who in a broad
stream
Are pouring out to Earth and teachers need,

Must have, in fact. Degen, the Records show,
Hath lived his well-earned cycle of contentment here,
But seems inclined to tarry; he should on;
For grief, and ignorance, and war and woe
Go with these bound souls to this new world below.

THIRD JUDGE

But he will never go and leave his Corna here,
And he were less than Angel could he take her there himself.
Craig, thou art the treasured friend of this blest pair.
What is thy plan to bless the Earth and win Arch Angel here?

(*Craig, greatly moved walks back and forth across the green lawn, saying in aside*:)

She has the mother soul, she'll do it, she will go.

(*Stops in front of judges*)

I have a plan, but well the High God knows
I were no son of His if I could plan
Their sojourn on that earth through sweat and blood,
And not shed tears; oh! friends, a heavy load
Is mine to bear if this you ask of me,
I'll do it, but I'll weep, this duty hard to see.

FIRST JUDGE (*kindly*)

To thee great Craig is this great work allotted,
Forget the woe, it is not woe you plotted,
But Degen's good, and God's great glory heightened;
Joy ceases to be joy when it cannot be brightened.

CRAIG (*sadly*)

Yonder they are, forgetful of the ages,
Nay, age is not for love nor such as they.
It seems a pity to disturb them here,
But they, perhaps, would never weary, and the earth
Rolls on in darkness, bound in flesh corrupt.
I'll see to it they go.
(*Degen and Corna approach, laughing and talking brightly. Degen greets them*).
Hail! High Ones, hail and welcome here,
Blessings do multiply, nor lose their charm which ever grows
More bright. Sometimes I fear
My blessings blind me; how goes it with the Earth?
What has the Master planned for it? In truth
It looks much like a kindergarten now,
Such hords of half-formed souls into it pour.

FIRST JUDGE

Such is indeed the plan. Hast thou been there?

DEGEN

Yes, recently with Corna here,
I toured the younger worlds, and found this Earth
Presents some interesting problems, and as you must know,
Great numbers from this plane have pledged to go
In all forgetfulness, and with these clods
Work their long way back to the plane of Gods.
But for sweet Corna here—(*Degen shakes head and turns away; Judges and Degen walk off, discussing flowers and shrubs*).

Corna (*Timidly approaching Craig, placing hand on his arm*). Oh! Craig, I fear, I fear—I know not what I fear. But Degen is perfect;
Oh! it could not be; but tell me of these (*motions towards judges*);
They have been here before, but oh—

CRAIG

Corna, the Master alone is perfect, but he asks

That we draw nigh him—(*takes her hands in his*);
child wouldst thou give
God an Arch-angel, Earth a prophet wise?

CORNA

Oh! I knew, I knew that it must come,
He never can take me, 'tis I must go.
I cannot tell him, Craig, I'll just away.
He'll come to find me; farewell, perfect day.
(*Dies*).

CRAIG

Father of All, behold this noble child
Assuming here Inconstancy's dark mask;
Binding herself upon the wheel of fate,
Forgetful, helpless in the maw of Time,
To weave through many lives the checkered web
Of hopes and fears, of burning love and hate;
Divinity deep buried, whose flesh-bound hands
Beat but a feeble tattoo on the gates of Heaven.
Father, since I have seen her fall, I pray you let me
see
At the end of this long cycle, her rise, her victory.
(*Walks off stage, weeping*).

* * * *

Scene 2—The same scene as is shown in prologue. Time, Stone Age. Curtain rises on Corna

and Osmo sleeping in cave. Corna wakes, sits up and cautiously creeps away from Osmo, digs in sand, drags out bird which she has buried there. Stirs fire, throws on wood and puts bird on fire. Presently she begins eating it. Osmo wakes and with a savage growl, springs on Corna, taking bird away from her and eats it as he holds her against the wall of the cave. When he has finished, he throws the bones on the fire, turns and beats Corna, shoving her out of the cave. Both are clad in short skin garments.

OSMO

Devil, go now and with your devil eyes
Get more. You put a spell on them and say
You are more cunning than your man, you devil
woman.
You make them hide from me, and then you hide
What you catch. You would let me starve, you!
you!
Go, catch and kill. I'll watch for you, now go.

(*Corna runs down path leaving Osmo alone in cave. He walks about muttering, and presently walks slowly after Corna. Soon Corna bounds into cave, coming in from the other side. She has a great fish hugged up in her arms. Looking around and finding Osmo gone she drops fish, laughing and clapping her hands*).

CORNA

Great, stupid Osmo, I've beat him, sure he's beat again.
I've something here to eat, and he will come
With empty hands and drive me out, I know.
He says he's like to starve, 'tis I who starve;
I'll hide it here and when he sleeps, I'll creep out here alone
And eat it all, just every bit, so there! (*Puts fish in hole in side of cave, concealing it with small rocks. Suddenly she drops behind boulder, peering around as if frightened. Degen creeps up cautiously, holding great bow and arrow in place ready to shoot. He stands a long time, looking about, sees Corna, utters a sharp cry and springs upon her, dragging her from behind the rock. Corna fights him, screaming*).

DEGEN

You are my woman now, my woman. Osmo stole you from me.
I had the grandest cave of all, but when I came for you
I found you not, and I have hunted for you; now
I take you, you are mine so come with me. (*Corna*

gradually ceases to struggle, timidly touches Degen's bow).

CORNA

What's this?

DEGEN

This I have made myself. Behold, it bites to kill. (*Draws bow, shoots arrow which buries itself in rock and sand. Degen laughs*).
I can keep you now, and I can feed you, too;
Osmo, great ox! he shall not have you, you are my woman. (*Gathers her up in his arms and starts off, when Osmo with a savage roar rushes out on him. Degen drops Corna, fights. Osmo chokes Degen. Corna grabs stone axe and runs about the two. Getting a chance she buries the axe in Osmo's head. She screams savagely, drags Osmo to edge of cliff and shoves him off. Runs back to Degen, tries to revvie him, but finding him dead, falls in a faint over his body as Oak, attracted by her screams, comes around bluff. He looks at the dead man, sees where Osmo has fallen, picks up bow, examines it, discovering how it works, he shouts*).

OAK

This makes me master of the world, since he is dead.
(*Drops on knees, looking long and earnestly into Degen's upstaring eyes as if to read some message for the world in those glazing windows of a departed soul. He looks at Corna, and finding her alive, takes her up, exclaiming*).
This is my woman now, and we will build
On his beginning. He was no mean man. (*Walks off with Corna over his shoulders. Craig in white appears and supports Corna's head. Curtain*).

* * * *

ACT II

Scene—Same as last but trail has been widened into road which winds up to castle in background. Time, centuries later, the beginning of the Christian era. Corna appears talking to her dogs, great hounds that crowd about her. She cuffs them, saying:

Down, down! There is enchantment here, I feel
its spell
Now as I ever do when in this spot,
As though some other self had dwelt within
This rocky cave in ages long gone by.
I am a foolish maid who thinks she sees
Life at her loom weave pictures strange and weird
Here in the gloom of this old cave man's home.
Here my heart faints with something like to fright,
Here, too, it beats with what Love's pulse must be;
If Fate seeks not this spot to greet me first,
I'll have naught of him, I'll not know his face:
Here my prince rides to meet me, and no other place.

(*Laughs, kisses her finger tips as Degen, in armor and plumed bonnet, rides up surprising her. He dismounts, drops on knees, doffing bonnet*).

DEGEN

Sweet Princess of the hills, if I behold
A mortal maid, behold your knight in me;
This sword which has not failed me in the past
Will have a keener edge in fight for thee, and fast
The blood of traitor hearts will follow each retreat,
Which but retreats to gather double strength
For each renewed attack. Thou art too fair
The chains of lust and slavery to wear.

CORNA (*aside*)

He's mad—(*approaches Degen, placing hand on his hair*);
Arise, Sir Knight, thy words of war and hate
Are empty here of meaning, for behold I am
The daughter of my father, noble Justin, who
Dwells safely in yon fortressed castle strong;
War comes not here, kind sir, to stop my song.
Arise.

(*Degen springs to his feet, clasps her hands, exclaiming*:)

Would thy sweet confidence in yon good castle had
Its root in truth; would that my words of war
Were madman's raving, but alas, sweet maid,
The invader's host like the black plague, arrayed

Against thy land, even now do storm the walls.
(*They hear shouting and great commotion*).
Come, fly with me, I'll guard thee as I may.

CORNA

Fly while my noble father fights
To save his daughter from profaning hands?
Sir Knight, I were no child of his could I thus fly
Before the first faint breath of war, and leave him there,
A prey to doubt, perhaps to die and not to know
His daughter's soul could bear him company.
Unsheath the sword you lately vowed would guard my life;
If death awaits me, then am I Death's wife;
If you do save him, then, Sir Knight, I'll be
Thy servants' servant, an' thou askest me.

DEGEN

Princess indeed thou art, and like a princess thou behavest in the presence of a darker fate;
Oh! Death would greet me with a laurel crown,
A sweeter boon than life beneath thy frown.

CORNA

Follow me then, we'll take this narrow path,
Its dangers frighten every one, but I

Full oft in reckless mood have walked this way
Among these towering crags, to drop unseen
Within the castle walls. Sir Knight, I kiss
That unsheathed sword. (*Kisses the sword, turns and bounds up over the rocks, Degen following. Enter soldiers in armor with Justin in chains and Hagar, Corna's nurse, and company of serving men and women. Justin raises his manacled hands, as company pauses in front of cave. Soldiers draw aside*).

JUSTIN

My daughter, my sweet Corna, it was here
You loved to while away the happy hours,
Dreaming your maiden dreams I might not share,
nor cared to,
For I knew
An angel might have traded thoughts with you,
And joyously returned with yours to God;
Look, Hagar, how the flowers bloom where her feet
have trod.

HAGAR

Oh, Master! Oh, good Justin! you know
How oft I carried her when but a babe, down this
same path to pluck

Bright flowers like these, her brightness never dimmed;
The butterflies whose fairy wings were rimmed
With purest gold, did seek her as a friend,
Companion sprites, rejoicing in her joy.
Where, thinkest thou, she tarries?

JUSTIN

Hagar, I dare not think; pray thou despair
Like a strong drug, works madness in my brain,
That I may see Misfortune's face, more fair
Than Fortune's own, make fool of Fate again.

HAGAR

Master, without my prayers, though like a river, they
Flood all my veins, hast thou defeated Fate
That thou canst look on this, thy darkest day,
For means to triumph over thy defeat?
Thy present greatness makes thy past greatness small;
The day's not done, good Justin, and no more thy fall.

JUSTIN

Yes, the winds shout victory, shout victory to me;
I know not what it means, but Moses' God

Is God still. Hark, I hear her voice!

HAGAR

Oh, Master! noble Justin, thy hands are chained,
Thy hands! thy hands are chained!

JUSTIN

And my sword is broken; God, Thou art still my God.

(*Degen and Corna run in, Degen fighting as with the strength of ten, clears way for Corna who rushes to her father*).

CORNA

Father, thy daughter's come and brought thee victory,
Mistake it not, I pray thee, bless me now.

(*Hands him dagger which he plunges into her bosom*).

I faint before thy greatness; 'tis thy crowning hour.

(*Falls, blowing kiss to Degen with her last motion, dies smiling. Justin gazes at her for a moment, lays down quietly beside her, dies. Degen fights way out, shouting as he wins way to freedom*).

DEGEN

Angels do carry her, and lay her safe
Within the bosom of my father's God;
I know now why I live, she's taught me how to die;
The rod that broke her, sprouts with living green—
(*Craig, in white, appears beside him, and unnoticed places an arm about his shoulders*).
And I'll—I'll kiss the rod.

(*Walks off stage with Craig's arm still about him, leaving soldiers gazing as if stunned at the beautiful body of Corna*). Curtain.

* * * *

ACT III

Scene I—Great hall with marble columns and stair case, palms and rich hangings. Place, north Scotland. Time, beginning of the Eighteenth century. Curtain rises on two gentlemen.

First Gentleman

Where is our poet, he was here but now?
Mark me, Sir Edward, that youth will travel far.
His latest volume promises so much
Of mental wealth, as yet he's barely touched
The fountain of his being—or it so appears.

Second Gentleman

I doubt not your words are true enough. Does he
not go
To London shortly? I hear he takes his seat
Next week. The house of Lords
Will listen to his maiden speech. Is it not so?

First Gentleman

Perhaps, but he is not inclined
To statecraft, and our Laureate

Has so unmercifully attack'd his latest work
I think his energies will all be bent
To breaking him. You see he lifted him so high
To ridicule and rob of schoolboy honors,
He woke the man, and hurled the poet in the public eye;
He'll not be readily pluck'd hence.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Indeed he seems a fiery youth. He'll grace the name
He bears. (*They pass out through heavy curtains, as Corna with Lady Sybil and Lady Clara come down stairs, laughing and talking*).

LADY SYBIL

Your young poet moons apart. I wager that
Behind some palm or pillar, he
This moment, with the self-same words we all employ
In so plain speech, weaves into elfin music,
Builds into fairy castles, stitches moonbeam cloth,
To grace none other than yourself, you naughty wight.
Genius is not personal, you should let him write
In God's name for the kingdom.

LADY CLARA

Yes, in God's name, since you two have played together
Since Childhood on the banks of Leman here,
Explored these banks and braes and wandered through the heather,
Scaled these heaven aspiring hills to come more near
To Paradise, no doubt you found it, still
As Lady Sybil says, the Nation claims
Genius; I cry "Hands off," until he sees
You are not England—no—nor Scotland either.

CORNA

Oh, hush! pray hush your foolish chatter.
Do you think I could love that lame boy?
(*Lady Clara and Lady Sybil run off laughing as Degen walks up to Corna*).

DEGEN

You do not care, you mean you have not known
As I have known for years, that we were meant
From the beginning and for all time to be
Completion for each other. I had thought
That I could trust kind Nature not to lie to me,

And Nature still proclaims you wholly mine.
I am confused, I do not understand. I knew that
you were mine.

(*Corna makes as if to speak, when Craig appears and places hand over her mouth. She seems to struggle with emotion, and stretches her hands after him as Degen rushes away. Craig holds her as she starts to follow him. She drops her hands with a despairing motion as Degen disappears*).

CORNA (*after a pause*)

I did not know, oh, boy! I did not know that you
had grown
Into a man. I did not know you knew, I only
knew
That you were near and kind and that we two
Never needed words to bind us soul to soul.
(*Another pause*).
But words have broke the spell—just words.
(*Passes out leaving Craig alone*).

CRAIG

'Tis hard to keep them from each other's arms.
But to fulfill their vows, I must
Withhold this joy a little life or two;
I needs must stand close by, the flesh is weak.

His heart is fire now, and he'll hold that torch
Aloft to lighten this self-blinded world;
He'll show them their own lies by his self-scorching
flame.

(*Exit. Enter Corna's father, and Lord Fulton, a suitor of Corna*).

LORD FULTON

Then I may ask your daughter for her hand
And you will help persuade her it is best,
Most fitting that her beauty and my name
Should go together. Will you call her here?

FATHER (*as Corna returns to the hall*)

She is here. Corna, my child!

CORNA

Yes, father, I am here.

FATHER

Lord Fulton honors you—he asks your hand in marriage.

CORNA

Father, I cannot—I—

FATHER

But yes, you can—it is most fit you should.

CORNA

I—

LORD FULTON

Corna, I claim you as reward for faithfulness,
I have loved you long.

CORNA

Father—Lord Fulton—I would—

LORD FULTON

Come, it is settled.

(*Takes her hand and kisses it*).
My mother's ring, Corna, shall now be yours.
(*Slips ring on her finger, kisses hand again and walks off with her father. Corna stands looking at ring on her finger*).

CORNA

It does not matter—(*after pause*)—nothing matters now.

(*Stands staring out with unseeing eyes as curtain slowly descends*).

* * * *

Scene 2—Interior of great Church. Time, years later. Curtain rises on group of citizens standing near altar which is banked with flowers.

First Citizen

The noble poet's dead.

Second Citizen

Yes. In Greece, the land of his adoption.

Third Citizen

On Freedom's altar he laid down his life.
He died for Greece,—he died for liberty.

First Citizen

England won't mourn him, but she'll boast of him.

Second Citizen

There are those will mourn him, even in England here.

He wrote no more that truth, old England wore
In silks and sable many a festering sore
He but thought to cleanse and time will prove he did.

THIRD CITIZEN

England claims his ashes. Today we receive him here.
(*Bell tolls and funeral march is heard in distance*).
He'll lie in state to receive the homage due him.

FIRST CITIZEN

They say the sweetheart of his youthful days
Went mad when told that he had passed away.
(*Music ceases, and solemn procession bears body of Degen on richly draped bier, into church, placing it before the altar. All depart. Corna comes in alone*).

CORNA

He is here, they say that he is here.
They said that he was dead, but that is false;
He could not die until he knew that he was dear,
Dear to my heart. But he shall know.

(*Pauses by Degen's bier, gazing rapturously at his peaceful face*).

He sleeps; I'll not awake him for his dreams
Are pleasant—how like a god he looks
In slumber. How like a very god.
If he would wake, I'd tell him how the years
Were empty, meaningless and all too long
After he left me, after he went away.

(*After pause*).

I have been patient, I'll but touch his hand.

(*Clasps his hand, starts violently*).

Cold! he is cold! Bring wraps, some one bring wraps. (*Angrily*).
Where are they who should guard the poet's sleep?

(*Tears drapery from bier and wraps around body*).

How he sleeps, how still he lies. He seems
Not like himself, not like the Highland boy
My heart remembers,—he was wind and fire.
How still he lies.

(*Corna's hair drops from its fastening, and she wraps it about his hands, frantically endeavoring to warm them. Craig appears stands at head of bier, weeps as Corna strives to arouse Degen*).

Best, bravest, your Corna calls you, will you not awake?
There is one truth that's bigger than all others,
Whom God hath joined! Whom God hath joined!

Oh! Oh! what smothers
His ardent voice—

CRAIG (*praying*)

Father, compassion moves me, lift the veil
For but one moment from her darkened eyes.

(*Storm breaks, there is lurid flashing of lightning and great crashing of thunder. Craig continues to pray and cloud forms over bier. Degen appears in white, holding out his arms to Corna*).

DEGEN

Beloved, I heard thy call; weep not for me.
The Father grants this, I may walk with thee,
Walk with thee to the end. They'll call thee mad—
What matters it, so that thou art not mad
But awake in Spirit land. Oh! be thou glad.

(*They stand hand in hand with glorified faces uplifted toward a great light which streams down over them*).

CRAIG

The light of the just which shineth more and more
unto the
Perfect day.

(*The storm continues to rage and Craig still prays to hold the spell. Presently the cloud fades from about the bier and Degen is seen lying on it as before, cold and still. Corna walks out with calm, sad face, Craig's arm about her. The light slowly fades and darkness gathers in the church and over the still form of Degen*).

Curtain

EPILOGUE

Same scene as at first, but soft radiance shines over all.

Tammen is seen, together with Craig and group of judges from the Seventh heaven. Degen and Corna still asleep.

CRAIG (*addressing Tammen*)

It is enough! 'Tis finished—awake them.

TAMMEN

(*Passes hands over their faces, calling to them*).
My children, rouse thee! life calls thee back to duty;
Work through the gloom to prove thy dream of beauty.

(*Degen and Corna, oblivious to the others, rise and Corna stumbles toward Degen's outstretched arms*).

CORNA (*joyfully*)

Degen!

DEGEN

Beloved, to have thee living in my arms again!

CORNA

Beloved, to rest within thy arms again!
(*They clasp hands and both turn to Craig*).
You, too, blest Craig, oh! friend, companion, brother.

DEGEN (*turns to judges*)

Hail, High Ones! hail! Oh, teach a willing servant,
What is God's will?

FIRST JUDGE

It is the time of trial, the time of tribulation, shod thy feet
For rougher roads than thou hast traveled yet.

SECOND JUDGE

It is God's threshing time. There is
A winnowing of souls; a new time dawns
For earth, and wearied, faithful souls
Who have fought a good fight in the epoch past,
God calls to brighten heaven with a new rejoicing
Press on a little space, and wide awake.

THIRD JUDGE

Earth needs thy knowledge. All that we have taught
Pass on to these, in subtle cunning wrought
Fit for their minds, fit for their understanding.

FIRST JUDGE

A seeming thankless task is thine, good Degen.
But dwell upon God's patience to perfect thy soul;
Remember thou God's everlasting love, and speak.
The answer is with God and with eternity—
Thou canst not see the answer, but press on, be wise.

DEGEN (*kneels before them*)

Bless me and give me strength. The earth seems dark.
Bless me and give me memory e'er you depart.

FIRST JUDGE

Memory thou hast, not as a gift from God—
A self-sought prize, discovered and retained;
Thyself sought Solitude and heard him speak.
Thou couldst not, if thou wouldst, forget.

(*Corna kneels by Degen; Craig places hands on their heads*).

ALL THE JUDGES

Adieu!

CRAIG

Adieu!

(*Tammen waves hands; there is a moment of darkness and then Degen and Corna are seen alone on a bleak gray mountain. They clasp hands and with firm steps, start together toward the battle field of life*).

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